

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Claims 1-31 (Canceled).

32. (Currently Amended) A locking clip for removably coupling a frame and a headgear assembly of a respiratory mask assembly for delivering breathable gas to a patient, the locking clip comprising:

a main body providing a front portion and a rear portion, the front portion adapted to be removably coupled with the frame and the rear portion adapted to be removably coupled to the headgear assembly,

the rear portion including a cross bar that forms an opening through which a strap of the headgear assembly can pass and be removably coupled with the cross bar, and the front portion including at least one resiliently flexible spring arm,

each spring arm including a first end including a locking tab at a free end thereof, a second end attached to the main body, a proximal portion extending from the second end, and a central portion extending from and angled with respect to the proximal portion,

wherein the proximal portion is spaced from the main body by a first gap and the central portion is spaced from the rear portion by a second gap, the proximal portion defines an edge of the first gap and the central portion defines an edge of the second gap, and the first and second gaps forming a general L-shape.

33. (Previously Presented) The locking clip according to claim 32, wherein the second gap extends from a lateral side of the clip.

34. (Previously Presented) The locking clip according to claim 32, wherein the at least one resiliently flexible spring arm is flexible within the plane of the main body.

35. (Previously Presented) The locking clip according to claim 32, wherein the locking clip includes a pair of spring arms.

36. (Previously Presented) The locking clip according to claim 35, wherein the locking clip includes a central support tab positioned between the pair of spring arms, the central support tab adapted to be inserted into a slot of the frame to guide the locking clip into engagement with the frame.

37. (Previously Presented) The locking clip according to claim 36, wherein the central support tab extends forward from each of the spring arms.

38. (Previously Presented) The locking clip according to claim 37, wherein the central support tab includes a groove adapted to receive a protrusion provided in the slot of the frame when the locking clip and frame are removably coupled to one another.

39. (Previously Presented) The locking clip according to claim 38, wherein the groove has a length that is at least half a length of the central support tab.

40. (Previously Presented) The locking clip according to claim 39, wherein the front portion and the rear portion are disposed at an angle with respect to one another.

41. (Previously Presented) The locking clip according to claim 40, wherein an outward surface of each spring arm includes a finger grip portion adapted to facilitate gripping by the patient in use.

42. (Previously Presented) The locking clip according to claim 41, wherein the finger grip portion includes a series of protrusions.

43. (Previously Presented) The locking clip according to claim 42, wherein the locking clip is configured to allow the patient to grasp the same between the thumb and forefinger of the patient.

44. (Previously Presented) The locking clip according to claim 43, wherein the first and second gaps provide flexing space for each spring arm.

45. (Previously Presented) The locking clip according to claim 44, wherein each spring arm has a general spring loop design.

46. (Previously Presented) The locking clip according to claim 45, wherein the locking clip is made of a polyester material.

47. (Canceled).

48. (Previously Presented) A respiratory mask assembly for delivering breathable gas to a patient, comprising:

a frame having a main body and a side frame member provided on each lateral side of the main body, at least one of the side frame members including an integrally formed locking clip receiver assembly; and

at least one locking clip according to claim 32, the front portion of the at least one locking clip adapted to be removably coupled with the at least one locking clip receiver assembly of the frame.

49. (Previously Presented) The respiratory mask assembly according to claim 48, wherein the mask assembly is a nasal mask.

Claims 50-52 (Canceled).

53. (Previously Presented) The locking clip according to claim 32, wherein the proximal portion and the central portion form a general L-shape.

54. (Previously Presented) The locking clip according to claim 32, wherein the proximal portion extends from the second end towards the rear portion.

55. (Previously Presented) The locking clip according to claim 32, wherein the front portion includes a central support tab adapted to guide the locking clip into engagement with the frame, the proximal portion extending from the central support tab.

56. (Previously Presented) The locking clip according to claim 32, wherein each spring arm defines a general four-sided loop.

57. (Previously Presented) The locking clip according to claim 32, further comprising a central support tab having a front end portion to be inserted into the frame and a rear end portion to which each said spring arm is connected.

58. (Currently Amended) A locking clip for removably coupling a frame and a headgear assembly of a respiratory mask assembly for delivering breathable gas to a patient, the locking clip comprising:

a main body providing a front portion and a rear portion, the front portion including a central support tab having a front end portion to be inserted into the frame and a rear end portion; and

at least one resiliently flexible spring arm ~~connected to~~ extending from the rear end portion of the central support tab,

each spring arm including a first end including a locking tab at a free end thereof, a second end attached to the rear end portion, a proximal portion extending from the second end, and a central portion extending from and angled with respect to the proximal portion,

wherein the proximal portion is spaced from the main body by a first gap and the central portion is spaced from the rear portion by a second gap, the proximal portion defines an

edge of the first gap and the central portion defines an edge of the second gap, and the first and second gaps forming a general L-shape.